423 cost payable over a period of thirty years. As pointed out
657 by Professor Abu-Zeid (n.d.), this law is welcomed in part
656 because the garden area to which it really applies (the garden area in al-Qasr would be the 'izba sector) is not considered "tribal territory" or lineage-owned as are the barley and pasture regions.

653 Governmental activity growing out of the "Desert Law"
177 has been an important catalyst for social, economic and
*613 political change. All of these aspects of change had repercussions on the lineage system and the authority structure of the Bedouins. In 1959, the government entered al-Qasr with the goal of revitalizing and reorganizing the hydraulic system of the area. The revival of the Roman water system, especially the network of cisterns covering the southern region of al-Qasr, and, on the coast, the restoration of the well system and underground galleries, the drilling of new wells and the intensification of olive farming have all led to a levelling of economic differentiation between lineages and between individuals.

659 In 1956, the Egyptian government passed the Cooperative
177 Law (U.A.R. Law Number 217) establishing agricultural cooperative
474 societies throughout the country. But not until 1959 did this law have any impact on the tribes of the Western Desert. Generally, the cooperative society has served as a primary
•[433] and successful agent of social change in the desert. It has

657 sanctioned the direction of economic development from a
177 pastoral to a market-oriented, agricultural mode of production.
474 Land reclamation and development projects administered by the
• 433 cooperatives encourage the Bedouins to produce cash crops.
In this way, Al-Qasr is being drawn into the national economy.
Price changes and seasonal commodity preferences in the Nile
Valley now affect the economy of al-Qasr. The generation of a
[18] cash economy has created a competitive spirit and a degree of
individual independence which cuts across tribal loyalty and
affiliations. The cooperative society, in this manner, tends
to be a "social equalizer."

657 But economic transformation as the intended goal of the
177 Cooperative Law is far from being an accomplished fact. Al-
178 Qasr is still a traditional Bedouin society in the sense that
474 the lineage structure is the framework in which economic and
*613 social relations take place. Because the cooperative society,
as a new basis for association, threatens the dominance of the
lineage principle, it has become the focal point for a struggle
between the old and new.

657 The major problem encountered by the government officials
177 in this program is that the cooperative society, as a central
474 agent for the dispensation of aid products, becomes a pawn in
661 tribal power politics. The government, forced to rely upon the
435 prestigious and wealthy men for the initiation of an innovative
program, found itself unable to prevent profiteering and the

474 661 of the needs of their tribesmen; that, in fact, the patronage system is relative to the traditional situation. Unavoidably, 474 619 the al-Qasr cooperative society is dominated by one tribe: 107 of its members are from the 'Aishaibat, while only 12 are from other tribes. This relationship between traditional and modern structures is common throughout the Western Desert. When a new cooperative is organized within the boundaries of a certain tribal mintaqa, members of the local tribe will resign from other cooperatives to join "their own." Thus, when a new cooperative was founded in Marsa Matruh, twenty members of the Jum'iat tribe left the al-Qasr branch to join the new chapter which catered largely to the needs of the Jum'iat in the town.

474 747 433 177 The World Food Program of the Food and Agriculture Organization (F.A.O.) of the United Nations operates through the cooperative society. It has had an impact on the economy of the Bedouins of al-Qasr. In 1963, this organization, with the cooperation of the U.A.R. government, proposed to stabilize economic conditions in the Western Desert by providing 4,000 Bedouin families (20,000 persons) with enough food and fodder to help them through the three dry summer months. The program was designed to encourage mixed and settled farming through the reclamation of 20,000 acres of arid desert land, while its range improvement project was to furnish pasturage for 500,000 sheep throughout the Northwestern Coastal Zone. In al-Qasr,

1: Obermeyer E-5 (1964-1965) 1969 MT9 Libyan Bedouin MT9
Aishaibat

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this number included pasturage for 11,000 sheep (Abu-Zeid n.d.: 19-27).

F.A.O. has encountered a number of serious problems and the program has received setbacks. The program, as an agent of social change, failed to take proper measure of the structural and ideological aspects of the Bedouin traditional system. Range improvement projects were carried out with disregard for existing tribal boundaries (the mintaqa) in the desert. In one case, the Bedouins removed fences on their property, and allowed sheep to destroy an entire experimental range area. Food distribution has fallen short because polygyny as a structural feature of marriage and the Bedouin family was not taken into account. The government estimated five persons per family, and planned to distribute food to 4,000 families. They were only able to subsidize 3,281 families. Aid officials failed to consider the strength of Bedouin values. To qualify for government aid, a Bedouin must belong to his local cooperative society. Some Bedouins wish to remain independent of government business, and others cannot afford the 50 piasters membership dues. A man may borrow money from another, of course, but in al-Qasr a "debt" is actually a particular kind of social relation which, like all others, carries with it a set of specific rights and obligations. A debt among Bedouins is a complex relationship: it may draw two parties together, or it may be, as it is with the Kachins of Burma (Leach 1954:153),

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747 the basis of conflict. Bedouins may be unwilling to contract
177 such a potentially significant relationship for the 10 piasters
424 it takes to join the cooperative society. In yet another area,
426 program administrators concerned with nutritional improvement
571 have ignored the culturally important areas of food preferences
747 and, more seriously, food prohibitions. The Bedouins, who
177 subsist mainly on their own animal products, barley bread, and
262 a few fresh vegetables, are extremely hesitant to accept what
they consider ritually "unclean meat from foreigners," powdered
milk, dried fish, and Kraft cheese. They are willing to
747 accept grain, flour, and the cottonseed cakes which are used
177 as fodder. In other words, the Bedouins seem to be presented
[178] with poor alternatives which may tend to reinforce choices
[433] related to the traditional productive organization, i.e.,
pastoralism. The exogenous stimuli to change are so culturally
objectionable that they actually generate conflict situations
and misunderstanding between agents and recipients of change.

747 Government programs have aimed at one aspect of
177 Bedouin society, the economic structure. They have ignored
433 the cultural underpinning of social organization, the system
of meanings in terms of which social action takes place
(Geertz 1957:32-54). The relationship between social and
economic behavior is, of course, an extremely important one.
But the economic structure cannot be transformed independently
of a specific cultural structure.

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The Bedouin of al-Qasr idealize the life of the pastoralist. It is a dominant theme in their culture. Gardening and arboriculture are perceived by the Bedouins as involving long hours of work, anxiety over waiting for profits, and complex market operations. They understand the logic and operation of the sheep market. Sheep are a store of value, a source of security, and a medium of exchange. In a good year of rain, a man can reap a good crop of barley, and buy more sheep against the inevitable bad year to come. While most Bedouins are, in one way or another, involved with the modern cash economy which ties al-Qasr to Marsa Matruh, the Bedouins who go into the production of cash crops on a large scale are those who can afford the risk of failure and who can survive the meager profits of the initial stage. These are the men who can adjust their world view from that of the pastoralist to that of the entrepreneur. There are only a few of these men in al-Qasr but they dominate the economy. Through them, most of the Bedouins of al-Qasr are linked to the national economy.

Land and Economy

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The period between 1960 and 1964 was one of significant economic change in al-Qasr. Dependence upon farming increased while pastoralist activities became less important. In the past, none of the Bedouins now living in al-Qasr were "townsmen," even my oldest informants had moved only once or twice in

1: Obermeyer E-5 (1964-1965) 1969 MIT Libraries Dewey MIT Aislie Chat

433 plant a small crop or graze their animals on the land of
197 relatives. In terms of economic specialty, the economy of
198 al-Qasr has for some time been a mixed one. Traditionally,
433 dependence was upon animal products with relatively few
197 vegetables being grown in the 'isha sector of the coast and
198 the barley sector to the south. Now, over one-half of the
241 registered land in al-Qasr is aboriculturel land, and much
311 more land is given over to the growing of vegetables than in
the past. Correspondingly, the barley land has contracted.
The Bedouins still use barley primarily for fodder but much
of this comes from the government. With the shift to olive
arboriculture and government aid in the form of flour and
grain, naturally the barley crop has become less crucial.
But it remains indispensable for many Bedouins during this
transitional period. All Bedouins of al-Qasr are concerned
with securing a good livlihood. They express this issue in
the term ma'isha sisha, and, as I have noted, they identify
it with the garden coastal sector of al-Qasr. The security
of a cash economy and participation in the national economy
433 have been realized by the Bedouins. I have no figures on the
241 amount of land registered prior to 1960, but, as of 1964,
311 al-Qasr consisted of 2,000 registered acres. Over one-half
434 of this land is in the garden area of al-Qasr, and is planted
with orchards. All of this land represents cash crops. Planted
in between the orchards are vegetable gardens. These gardens

1: Obermeyer E-5 (1964-1965) 1969 MIT Libraries Barcode: MIT Aleph/Other

These gardens

433 furnish staples for local consumption and more cash crops for
241 the Marsa Matruh market. Matruh is dependent upon these
311 vegetable goods from al-Qasr, to the extent that the Government
434 has forbidden the Bedouins to truck their goods to the higher
443 [656] priced market in Alexandria.

654 The success of arboriculture in al-Qasr has been the
245 result of a well-organized reclamation program in this area
177 by the government. The relatively good supply of fresh water
433 and the proximity of a large market town has made al-Qasr an atypical case in the government's attempt to transform the desert pastoral economy. Since 1960, the government's program has met with a great deal of success. Such results have, of course, induced the Bedouins of al-Qasr to accept changes, and have further enhanced the future of the program. The figures below show, as of 1964, the plant distribution of orchards in the 'izba of al-Qasr, and indicate the measure of success attained by the governmental reclamation program.

The environmental conditions of al-Qasr are particularly well-suited for the olive tree: the olive has been the basis of the economic transformation of al-Qasr. The Bedouins tend to play down the government's role in developing olive arboriculture in the al-Qasr area. But before 1960, only the very [556] wealthy men could afford to deal in the olive market, since it involves a great initial financial risk. Hence, prior to the entry of the government's program, there were 2,741 olive trees

1: Obermeyer E-5 (1964-1965) 1969 MIT Libraries Rotch Visual Collections

TABLE 1

ARBORICULTURE IN AL-QASR, 1964

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Plant	Acres	Plants Distributed	Successful Plants
Olive	947	40,399	37,480 (93%)
Almond	57	2,570	1,713 (67%)
Fig	66	10,537	(many in juvenile stage)
Grape	.5	512	512 (100%)
Peach	2.5	80%	200 (40%)

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in al-Qasr, and these were distributed among only 37 men. Most of these men also owned large numbers of sheep.

In 1960, the government began planting olive trees on the registered land of individuals living in the "date sector." This plan also involved instructing the Bedouins in the care of the tree: an individual who had traditionally depended on the rains now had to learn irrigation farming. This aspect of the program, learning modern "water discipline," was a source of conflict for the Bedouin with his pastoralist outlook on life. The olive tree must be watered twice weekly. The Bedouins say that this made them feel like "peasants." The Bedouins were also apprehensive over the fact that the olive tree did not bear its first fruit, i.e., the first real

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crop, until five to seven years after planting. To alleviate the difficulties of this period of apprehension, which the Governor of the desert province refers to as "the dangerous period," the United Nations F.A.O. aid program was designed and put into operation in al-Qasr.

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A Bedouin may purchase an olive seedling from the government for the price of two piasters (about 40 cents). This same seedling costs the government 25 piasters. Once through "the dangerous period," a Bedouin can expect a yield of 120 to 150 kilos of olives from one tree. Olives sell for about 15 piasters per kilo. Or, at a cost of 1 piaster per kilo, the olives can be converted into oil. One ton of olives will render about 23 per cent oil. Olive oil is now considered a luxury item in Egypt, and the market price is very high. But only the Bedouin with a large harvest of olives finds it profitable to sell his product on the oil market. These conditions have made many Bedouins willing to convert from horticulture and sedentary pastoralism to arboriculture.

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Between 1960 and 1964, the government reclamation program has planted a total of 9,514 olive trees on land registered to 124 individuals. The average distribution of trees, about seventy-six per man, is indicative of one of the problems related to change in al-Qasr and about which we have spoken earlier. Most of the trees have gone to men who, before

233 with the movement toward a cash economy, this has changed.
178 [465] The shepherd receives 8 to 10 piasters for each head of sheep which he tends. The Bedouins who have taken up farming can spare none of their family for sheep-herding chores. If he [497] can afford it, during the dry season, a Bedouin may ship his sheep to the Nile Valley by train at 12 piasters per head. But the government will not accept sheep for shipment unless they are accompanied by a shepherd. The role of shepherd has become a very specialized one in the al-Qasr area. Few [554] of the al-Qasr Bedouins are shepherds, and the role is reserved for the poorer men without land.

241 Plowing in the garden area is done by hand. Usually,
407 the plow is pulled by a donkey, but occasionally, if one can
492 afford it, a camel or a horse will be used. A man and his [462] sons handle all of the agricultural chores with the exception
178 of the winnowing process which the women do. Traditionally,
241 barley was threshed by camels plodding on it. The Bedouins say
492 that this is the best way because the soft feet of the camel do not crush the kernel. Now, however, very few men can afford [409] a camel. Threshing is done with a heavy wooden sled pulled by
241 a donkey or a horse. Tractors, when available, are used for
407 agricultural plowing in the southern barley zone. This zone,
434 during the year 1963, also became important for raising water-
•433 melons (batiikh), and this product figures to be an excellent cash crop for al-Qasr. Melons and barley can bring high profits

241 when planted in large quantities. The southern zone of al-Qasr
407 is best suited for these crops, and the tractor is necessary
434 for a successful crop.
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407 Tractors are rented through the cooperative society.
474 Local cooperative officers are responsible for seeing that all
[427] members share in the use of the tractor. But, in fact, officers and their closer relatives monopolize the tractors. The government
[654] has allotted to the al-Qasr cooperative five tractors. They feel that it would jeopardize the whole program of economic reform if they were to dictate the way in which the tractors
407 are to be used. Consequently, the tractor, like the rations
619 of foodstuffs, has become a pawn in tribal power plays. In
474 one case, not in al-Qasr, a tractor-driver who was a member of the 'Ali Abyad tribe insisted that members of the 'Ali Abyad tribe pay him a 50 piaster "tip" to have their fields plowed. Because of situations such as these, most Bedouins prefer that cooperative membership coincide with local group membership. It is better, they say, if the 'Aishaibat of al-Qasr have their own cooperative because they know how to handle problems among themselves. The government, during this transitional period, seems to agree.

407 One reason that tractors are monopolized by a small group is that there are not enough of the machines to handle the plowing. Of the five tractors in al-Qasr, seldom were more than two working simultaneously. Often, this was a result of

177 657 This program cannot be divorced from the fundamental political aim of the government which is to make the Bedouins politically conscious participants in the Egyptian political community. The reform program, which has been only outlined here, has had ramifying effects on the Bedouin traditional systems, especially the political, and that is a major concern of this study. Changes in one structure of society are apt to have repercussions in other structures. This seems particularly the case where the economic and political structures are concerned. Economic change has been a background to political structural change in al-Qasr. Political change is historical in al-Qasr, but it has been accelerated in the period starting with 1960. For these reasons, we are interested in both the traditional and the modern systems.

177 433 434 Change will continue to occur in al-Qasr. This is because the advantages of cash crops and a market economy are obvious to the Bedouin. He can even have more of what has been traditionally valued if he is successful in the modern market system. He can buy a sheep for 10 L.E., a goat for [435] 8 L.E.; a horse for 90 L.E.; a camel for 150 L.E.; and a fine spring tent for 125 L.E.. A Bedouin knows that he must, as an individual, register his land, build a stone house on it (which costs about 100 L.E.), and learn the technique of irrigation farming. All of the Bedouins of al-Qasr are in some degree willing to do this for the ma'isha sinya which it

177 brings. The future of the olive tree on the coast, and the
•433 growing importance of the melon crop in the southern sector
434 will be the bases of a modern al-Qasr. The table below gives
177 some indication of what the Bedouins of al-Qasr can hope for,
434 in terms of material profits, by a shift to a cash economy.
435 Prices are approximate, and as of 1964.

TABLE 4

PRICES OF KEY PRODUCTS IN AL-QASR, 1964

Crop	Price Per Unit	Possible Profit
Barley	3 L.E. per ardab (120 kg.)	20 L.E. per acre
Melon	8-12 piasters each	70-100 L.E. per acre
Mint	Few piaster per bunch	150 L.E. per acre
Olive	15 piasters per kg. of olives	1 tree=150 kg. of olives =22.5 L.E.
	40 piasters per kg. of oil	1 tree=30 kg. of olive oil =12.5 L.E.

423 Land Tenure and Rights of Ownership
*613

Traditionally, an individual's rights in the land were of usufruct and tenancy. Sovereignty over the land was vested in the corporate secondary lineage group (see Figure 7). The territory of al-Qasr is a division of lineage zones, and more will be said about this in the next chapter since it relates directly to the structural organization of Bedouin

423 society. Private ownership of land with sovereign rights
* [613] over it is now the normal practice in al-Qasr. Rights are
[178] held by the family head, the shaib. If the family head is
[596] deceased, land tenure rights are held jointly by the sons.

In the area beyond the plateau, in the extreme
[184] south of al-Qasr, land rights to grazing and water still are
* [613] associated with lineages. But here agriculture is impossible.
[241] The type of rights over the land varies with the method by which it is exploited. The southern and coastal sections of
* [433] al-Qasr represent the old and the new, the pastoral traditional mode of production and the modern agricultural cash economy.
[233] But, as noted, of the total population only a few Bedouins are actually engaged in pastoralist activities. Hence, tribal tenure rights, in general, are not overly important at this time. Not too long ago they were, and many cases in the recent
[671] history of Bedouin customary law relate to conflicts over land and water in the southern region. The Bedouins say that
[178] traditionally no lineage could use the pasturage or water of
* [613] another without some agreement, usually of long standing,
[233] made beforehand. Now, they say, permission is not needed.
[675] In the old days, these agreements were made between lineage representatives, not individuals per se. Today, the grass
178 and water in the southern zone are claimed, though not in a
423 legal sense, by the families using them: the rights of usufruct over the land are closer to rights of sovereignty

428 562 [422] inherited by a woman's daughters. The carpets and the tent, which are woven by women, are not their property to pass on for they belong to the head of the household, the shaib.

596 177 178 Economic change in al-Qasr has had its impact at the level of production mode, and, also, it has affected the composition of the basic family structure. One informant, [124] who is now nineteen years old, remembers growing up in a household composed of his grandfather, father, father's brothers and their families. Since that time, his father has built another house away from the family home; one uncle has moved to Marsa Matruh and opened a shop there; his youngest uncle has built a house not far from the family home; and one uncle remains with his three wives in the original house. This fission-type process is not uncommon in a segmentary society, although as a traditional process, it represented a mechanism for dealing with ecological pressures. In the modern case, in al-Qasr, the process of fission in the Bedouin social structure proves to be an adaptive mechanism also: the fragmentation of lineage property and relations is a positive condition for the transition to a cash and market economy. Among most of the families of al-Qasr, as market orientation increases brothers begin to economically differentiate their tasks and interests with an eye to individual profits.

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(literally, sky-wells, to indicate that they are dug to receive and preserve rain water). Most of these are ancient Roman pools which were claimed either by the government or by individuals, and are put into use again to store rain water. Recently, the government has erected a number of dams to preserve the rain water in exceptionally good years from flowing into the sea. All this, however, is not enough to provide the tribal population in the area with a permanent supply of water because of the limited capacity of the cisterns and the pools and the scarcity of rain and its erratic nature. Recent attempts have been made to tap the underground water in some parts of the area. A large number of wells were sunk, especially along the coast.

The economy of Awlad Ali is based on livestock husbandry, supplemented by occasional cultivation of barley. Owing largely to the variation in the amount of rainfall, the sources of food in the area have the important characteristic that the place and amount of their occurrence vary from one year to the next. Throughout most of the area, the tribal populations are concerned predominantly with warding off shortages in the food supply by moving with their flocks to areas where grazing lands are available.

Awlad Ali keep a variety of domestic animals, the most important of which, from the economic point of view, are sheep and goats. The economy of Awlad Ali is based on the utilization of the products of these two animals. These products are milk, meat, wool, and hides. Milk and its products constitute the basic element of the people's diet. Milk is never consumed fresh. It is always made into sour milk (maleh), kishk (dried milk), or butter.

233 The grazing season extends between November and April. As the dry season
221 advances, the flocks are moved northward to the cultivated lands so as to be nearer to fodder and to the waterholes which stand usually very close to the coastal zone. During the dry season, animals live mainly on barley straw and very little dry grass. In exceptionally bad years, the people are compelled to dispose of their animals or to sell some of them in order to be able to maintain the rest. In such years the shepherds find it necessary to cross the border to the permanent pasture of Cyrenaica in northeastern Libya, or to move to the Delta where they may purchase the right to graze in wheat fields after reaping the crop.

243 Grain crops, mainly barley, are also grown in the area. Depending on the rainfall, pockets of land characterized by deep alluvial soil and underground water at various depths are cultivated with barley and other grain crops. Barley cultivation is preferred by the people be-
[246] cause it grows quickly and matures faster than wheat; also, it can be cultivated in a range of soils and climates; it is mostly used as ani-
[132] mal feed. Barley straw is also used as fodder for animals. Because of the erratic nature of rainfall, barley production is hazardous in most
[233] of the region. For this reason, pastoralism remains the most impor-
[433] tant mode of subsistence, and cultivation becomes secondary. Cultivation is done on the basis of shifting cultivation, which means that the areas cultivated vary from one year to the next following the rainfall.

Land Tenure

423 Most of the cultivable lands, as well as the grazing lands, are
311 under tribal occupation. Awlad Ali have, by custom and usage, had for

3:Evans-Pritchard E-4, 5 (1942-1944) 1949 MT9 Libyan Bedouin MT9
(1837-1942) Sanusi

243 They could not sow a better crop. There are wild varieties of barley in Cyrenaica and the country is in every way suited to its culture. It is very hardy, stands up to drought, and easily holds its own against the grasses, which are ploughed in with [251] the seed on the plateau. When the barley and wheat have been reaped, the grain is stored in *kuf*. On the plateau these are ancient tomb-caves; elsewhere they are holes dug in the ground.

[731] In a bad year, and even more in a succession of bad years, the Bedouin have experienced famine, but in most years the barley, and to a lesser extent the wheat, give an abundant [433] yield. Bedouin have told me that they expect from sowing in the beds of wadis up to a hundredfold of barley and in the *barqa* up to fiftyfold. On the plateau the yield is smaller and in the Marmarica and Sirtica much smaller. In Turkish times [439] there was a large export of grain from Cyrenaica. Mondaini says that it was to the mean annual value of 40,000 Lire Sterling for the years 1885 to 1900.[1] Much of this surplus was bought by English brewers.

433 The Bedouin way of life is well adapted to their environment.
182 Given the inconstancy of the rainfall and the distribution of water supplies they would be foolish indeed were they not, at any rate in part, shepherds. They are not, of course, in all
433 respects self-supporting. They make their winter tents and a
439 good part of their equipment, carpets, sacks, and so forth, from
182 the wool of their beasts, but some things the Bedouin regard as
[237] necessities have to be imported, notably tea, sugar, some rice, and cloth, especially the *jird*, the woollen cloak of the country. They trade these with surplus stock on the hoof, skins, wool, clarified butter, surplus barley, and honey and wax, so that they are in an economic sense self-supporting.

433 Cyrenaica is a rich country for Bedouin, a poor country for
182 Europeans. Bedouin generally have no overhead expenses in
[556] production. I say generally, because rich men sometimes
[233] employ shepherds, though this is usually the practice of urban
[464] merchants engaged in the sheep trade. Bedouin use their own
[511] labour and that of their families and animals. What is perhaps more important is that they are prepared to live on what

[1] G. Mondaini, *Manuale di Storia e Legislazione Coloniale del Regno d'Italia*. 1927, p. 308.

3:Evans-Pritchard E-4, 5 (1942-1944) 1949 MT? Libyan Bedouin MT?
(1837-1942) Sanusi

THE BEDOUIN OF CYRENAICA

Europeans consider to be a low level of civilisation. They do not feel the need for expensive roads and ports, electric light, wireless sets, telephones, schools, churches, newspapers, and so forth; and clearly their economy could not support them. Time and again colonists, tempted from their homes by the short sea routes and the wooded plateau, have settled in the country and dispossessed the Bedouin, but in the end it is the Bedouin, and not the colonists, who have survived. When one looks at the massive Phoenician, Greek, Egyptian, and Roman ruins and the already half-ruined Italian towns, villages, and farms, and then on the flimsy tents of the Arabs, one cannot but reflect that the race is not always to the swift nor the battle to the strong.

III

Even in the steppe country it is difficult to find a Bedouin *naja'*, camp, for the camps are pitched in hollows and on the slopes of wadis and their feeders for shelter from rain and wind and too many visitors. On the plateau they are hidden in the forest. One cannot, therefore, make more than a very approximate estimate of the population of any part of the country, or of its distribution, by bare observation. It can, however, be said that at present the country is underpopulated and that the population is badly distributed between town and country, the urban part of it, which is almost entirely unproductive, being too large in relation to the whole.

There have been a number of estimates of the population by early travellers who visited the country in Turkish times. They had to make a guess at the population figure, aided by Turkish censuses. It has been suggested on the basis of their reports that the country then supported round about 250,000 souls.[1] The Turkish census of 1911 gave the population as 196,345, excluding Kufra.[2] Taking into account the various estimates which were made during the Italo-Sanusi wars, in the interval between them, and since, it may be said that to-day the total population of Cyrenaica is probably round about 200,000, of whom about a quarter live in the towns, the remainder being tented Bedouin and a few thousand oasis dwellers.

[1] Dr. Gotthold Hildebrandt, *Cyrenaika als Gebiet kaufmännischer Betätigung*, 1912, p. 317.

[2] Coro, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

4: Peters E-5 (1948-1950) 1970

secondary sections, in their very unevenness, show a more sensitive relation to more detailed ecological differences.

At all levels of segmentation, therefore, a high degree of consistency between the ecological divisions of the country and the genealogical divisions can be shown. Indeed the relationship is so close that it is tempting to consider the contemporary pattern of things as the only one possible. What historical evidence exists is against such a view being taken. It is known that tribes have been displaced in the past, some of them or sections of them having been pushed out into Egypt, and others having altered their position. This being so, there obviously cannot be any finality about the present distribution of tribes in relation to the ecological divisions of the country. Rather, the existing pattern is one of a number of possible permutations. Again, as the relation between groups of people to their environment becomes progressively sensitive with the decrease in the size and order of the group, then the more unstable will be the relationship between the two. Conversely the greater the size and order of the group the more persistent will be its relationship to the ecology. In other words, the major ecological divisions are more fundamental in their effect on the way of life and the economy of people, whereas the more detailed ecological differences between, say, tertiary sections have a relatively minor effect. The ecological differences between the wooded plateau area with its cow and goat herding economy, and the arid semi-desert area with its camel and sheep herding economy has a much more profound effect on the general way of life, and is a more persistent division, than that which exists between two tertiary sections where the differences may only be in topographical details.

While therefore, the division of people into groups of various sorts is not permanently fixed in relation to ecological divisions, there is always an intimate relationship between the two which is progressively more enduring as the order of the structural segment increases. Yet even this statement of the relationship, guarded as it is, does not suffice, for the pattern and distribution of tribes and their sections at any given moment are not only a function of ecology, but they are also the result of a number of other complex factors which may be operating to reinforce or to

6: Peters E-5 (1948-1950) 1965 MT9 Libyan Bedouin MT9 Cyrenaica

would be impossible to satisfy all marriage expectations of men within the universe of the minimal tribal section. For this reason alone external links are inevitable and persistent. Also, the small territorial strip such a group claims as a homeland produces an economy which, in this environment, is unstable. Additional security is gained by making connections with other tribal sections, each with its specific ecological character. Men also marry into their client groups. The proportion of these for this camp was 9 per cent of the total. From these links they gain economic advantages, they can claim services and a client-following is politically significant. Finally, 7 per cent of the total[13] are marriages with women of other tribes, which again not only reduces the instability of the economy (in that a large tribal area suffering near-famine conditions has access to areas of markedly different ecology), but also provides political connections for men whose power ambitions have passed the point of leadership limited to their own tribes. In one way or another all these interests are manifest in the small camp and attention is now directed to the latter.

The disposition of people in the camp is represented diagrammatically on the page following.

The nucleus of the camp is Tent A. Its owner (1) was a powerful Shaikh, the son of a famous father. His marriage represents a political link with a group of one of the primary sections of his own tribe. His father died only a few years before I recorded my census, and the large amount of moveable property he left had still not been divided among the sons; the owner of the tent, as eldest brother, still controlled the flocks and herds. Most of his time he spent away from the camp engaging in political intrigue. His two younger brothers lived in his tent, but the second (5) would not remain there long because negotiations for his marriage had been started. His father (2) married a parallel cousin; she died and shortly afterwards he took her sister (3) in sororal union. When this occurred an amount of bride-wealth was agreed, but instead of giving any of it to her father, the entire amount was "put in front of her" (that is, the animals were allowed to remain with her husband's flock), and these animals she had marked with her brother's tribal sign to distinguish them from those of her husband. It was widely known that she was going to leave these animals to her husband's second son, for although she could not transfer them to a male outside her husband's corporate group, she could decide who, among his heirs, should inherit.

During my stay in this camp, her brother's son (4) came to it as a temporary resident for a month. Since he was poor, the purpose of his visit was to capture some of his aunt's wealth while she was still alive and the possibility still existed. During his stay he was fed well but did no work. His kinsmen found his company tiresome, so, to cut short his stay, and after consulting her nominated heir (5), she gave him three grown goats. Also when an occasion arose for an animal slaughter, she provided the sheep, and

[13] The remainder is made up of marriages to the daughters of men incorporated into the lineages.